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fight left in retirees

DEAR EDITOR:

The IUE GM and Delphi hourly and salaried retirees "still have a lot of fight left" in us too.

Obama came to town to a select audience whose benefits were left in good order. Our leaders were not allowed to speak to him or attend his speech. It would not look good for him to face the people his auto task force left without proper insurance or pensions.

Further we were banned from rallying near the GM facility. Members were told that the Secret Service would not allow it. We were a peaceful group just wanting to be heard on our problems and the discriminatory way we are being treated. We were no threat to anyone.

So Obama says he is "keenly aware of our plight." We need more than awareness. We need immediate action. We need the same and equal treatment that has been afforded to GM's UAW retirees.

We ask no more than fairness and equality. We all worked for the same company and should be treated as equals.

Since we no longer have any IUE-represented plants at GM; the company has tossed us away like yesterday's trash, because there is no strike threat. We helped the company make profits that allowed it to take our jobs overseas for cheap labor and lax environmental and labor laws.

Our tax money helped save GM and at the same time helped take our promised benefits away from us. What kind of justice is that? We signed a retirement contract with GM and were promised free health benefits. Our benefits have been reduced many times, but it was across the board for everyone. This time it is select groups that are suffering through no fault of their own.

It's time to stop the disparity and discrimination and restore us to the same benefits that the UAW retirees enjoy.

Linda Pratt Fowler